



## Those inscrutable agents-provoked

*By Adolf A. Berle jr.*

**THE INVISIBLE GOVERNMENT.** By David Wise and Thomas B. Ross. Random House. 375 pp. \$5.95.

The deadly drama called the Cold War, directed by the Soviet Union against many countries and with the United States as its ultimate target, began even before armistices ended World War II. As matters developed in that terrible and unfinished struggle, the Central Intelligence Agency in time became the chief American apparatus defending a number of foreign areas and, with them, the U. S. itself. During many years, Allen Dulles was its chief of staff. In general, his program was successful; sometimes, it suffered defeat.

This ought to have been (and is not) the first paragraph of this interesting book describing a number of major engagements in the struggle. Its material is fascinating. Its lack of historical context—it scarcely mentions the enemy operations—conveys an unfair impression; the book is selective journalism, not history.

The title is hardly fair; the C.I.A. is neither a "government" nor wholly "invisible." Most of its operations, indeed, are secret, but this is equally true of the Departments of State and Defense and of a number of other Federal agencies. Rightly the authors raise the unsolved problems of how much secrecy is legitimate in democratic government and how to maintain effective control over vast, necessarily secret, operations. But that problem is by no means limited to any one organization.

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In fact, from 1947 on a virtual state of undeclared war has been maintained in a series of theaters and in varying degrees of intensity. The phrase "Cold War" obscures the fact that direct armed operations as well as subversion and revolutions were planned, organized, financed, directed, armed and frequently manned by the Soviet Union against other countries from bases on her own territory or territory under her control. Targets ran all the way from Laos to Cuba, from Vietnam to Venezuela. Accompanying propaganda made brutally clear that the ultimate "imperialist enemy" was the United States.

Responding, the wartime Office of Strategic Services (headed by General William Donovan), which had handled underground operations during World War II, was reorganized by the Truman Administration as the Central Intelligence Agency. To it was assigned the job not merely of collecting information but also of conducting active defense operations.

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should have been stated, rather than suggested, by the authors. Unless that fact is recognized, this narrative would be a meaningless tale of violence. The operations attributed to C.I.A. were measures selected by Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, respectively, to meet planned, clear-cut, admitted attacks. Primarily they were intended to defend weak countries against forcible seizure. Unless we accept the thesis that these allies, friends and areas of widest strategic importance should have been meekly surrendered, some sort of defense was essential.

For journalistic reasons, the early chapters deal (out of chronology) with the Bay of Pigs. That engagement was a humiliating defeat. All the same, the fact was—the authors barely mention it—that Soviet and satellite arms, organizers and finally troops were moving into Cuba at least as early as 1960. Some of these were being used by 1961 and forces were being prepared to attempt seizure of other parts of the Caribbean littoral. Almost certainly, take-over of all Latin America was the ultimate objective. Actually, the armed attack against Venezuela from Cuba continued straight into February, 1964; we have no reason to believe that the operation has yet been wholly abandoned. Little of this appears in the text; without it, the whole affair would be inexplicable.

The *Invisible Government* is thus interesting rather than really useful. It does narrate a series of engagements in such widely scattered countries as Iran, Vietnam, Guatemala, Burma and Laos. Some were victories; others, indeterminate; Cuba was a defeat. It is not possible to verify how far the C.I.A. was involved any more than it is to pinpoint the operations of the opposing Soviet apparatus. Short of direct engagement of American troops (which did take place

in Greece, Korea and Vietnam), no other means of effective counter-operation was available to—or at least developed by—the United States.

Yet passive acceptance of Soviet seizure of the areas attacked would have placed many areas, and ultimately the U.S. itself, in a most dangerous situation. I am certain, for example, that if the U.S. had not reacted against the Russian operation in Cuba at the time of the Bay of Pigs, greater disaster might well have resulted. Passive acquiescence then might well have meant that the U.S. would by now have been involved in full-scale war on the mainland of South or Central America. What did occur after the Bay of Pigs was the transport into Cuba of 30,000 Soviet troops with atomic weapons. This move precipitated the missile crisis and confrontation of October, 1962, capably narrated by Messrs. Wise and Ross. The full-scale defense against that operation enforced withdrawal of the Russian atomic weapons (directed ultimately against the United States, though in the first instance intended to cover force-operations in the Caribbean, primarily against Venezuela):

Control of para-military operations—or for that matter of any military operations—is extremely difficult, and doubly so when they are secret. Men in the field in the Army or C.I.A. maneuver as they can. They meet spot situations and suffer the fortunes of war. Both have successes and failures; both frequently act without reference to Washington—see, for example, Robert Murphy's account of the North African campaign in his *Diplomat Among Warriors*; both make their blunders, sometimes dangerous ones.

Except as these authors have endeavored to describe disparate parts of it, no connected history of the Cold War exists—it is history yet to be written. That drama, unhappily, is still going forward—as each morn-

ing's headlines about Laos, Vietnam and Southeast Asia pointedly disclose. Even now the American public only dimly apprehends the whole situation—merely evidencing a vague, continuing unhappiness. Meanwhile Allen Dulles and his predecessors carried the load.

The difficulties of making the political action of C.I.A. and in some cases its para-military action accord with Washington policy are greater even than when arms are in the field. The authors comment that the C.I.A. "has achieved a quasi-independent status and a power of its own. Under these conditions, and given the necessity for secret activities to remain secret, can the Invisible Government ever be made fully compatible with the democratic system? . . . The answer is no. . . . But, on the other hand, it seems inescapable that some form of Invisible Government is essential to national security in a time of Cold War."

The authors wonder whether its power and operations can not be made truly accountable. They suggest that a joint Congressional committee be set up, replacing the special Congressional committees currently in use. Actually, the chiefs of the C.I.A. and notably Allen Dulles were scrupulous in reporting to the President. The authors ask whether the risks—they mention the humiliation of the Bay of Pigs and the alienation of Sukarno—are worth running. All Presidents involved—Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy—would have agreed, I think, that the risks were weighed.

The final question—do such operations ever solve the problem?—is unhappily easy to answer. Force-operations never do. They merely determine who next picks up the burden of solution. The real, and only, answer is peace. But that depends on Moscow and, now also, Peking. As Adlai Stevenson said recently, peace is possible if the two Communist powers will let their neighbors alone. Then, we could do the same.

## There are two governments in the United States today. One is visible. The other is invisible —with the CIA at its center.

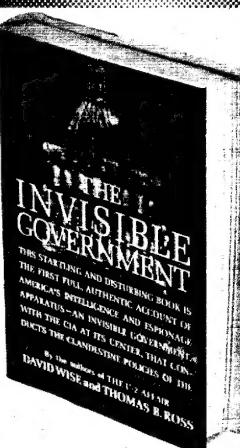
HERE is the first book to reveal the full extent and power of America's "Invisible Government"—a vast intelligence and espionage network, that carries out the secret policies of the United States around the world.

Its activities range from classic spying to electronic eavesdropping and top-secret satellite reconnaissance . . . from toppling a government by political intrigue to launching an armed invasion. It spends four billion dollars yearly—money appropriated by Congress without any real understanding of how it is to be spent.

Now, the authors of *The U-2 Affair* present a complete, documented picture of this huge, hidden machinery that spreads throughout the Government and

includes many supposedly private "cover" organizations all over the country. Important chapters deal with the Invisible Government's role in the Bay of Pigs, in Guatemala, Burma, Iran, Indonesia, Laos, and Vietnam . . . with the extraordinary precautions Sargent Shriver felt were necessary to keep CIA agents out of the Peace Corps . . . with the problem of keeping our giant network of intelligence agencies under control.

This book contains much never-before-published information on the clandestine operations of this "Invisible Government"—activities which we, as Americans, are entitled to be informed about. And it poses the vital question of how we can preserve our free, open society while fighting a secret war.



# The Invisible Government

By DAVID WISE,  
Chief of the Washington Bureau, N. Y. *Herald Tribune*

and THOMAS B. ROSS,  
Washington Correspondent, *Chicago Sun-Times*

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**RANDOM HOUSE** 



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**COMMITTEE OF VIGILANCE:** Revolution in San Francisco, 1851. By George R. Stewart. Illustrated. Houghton Mifflin. 339 pp. \$5.

**THE MADAMS OF SAN FRANCISCO:** An Irreverent History of the City by the Golden Gate. By Curt Gentry. Doubleday. 323 pp. \$4.95.

**THE FORGOTTEN CHARACTERS OF OLD SAN FRANCISCO.** By Robert Ernest Cowan, Anne Bancroft and Addie L. Ballou. Illustrated. Ward Ritchie Press. 103 pp. \$5.95.

Prominent in every San Francisco bookstore that I know is a well-stocked shelf of local history, a phenomenon that is surely found in a number of other American cities, but not, I would guess, in quite the same degree. As a measure of what I mean, three full-length studies of the earthquake and fire of 1906 have appeared during just the last five years. This is more earthquake and fire than I really care for.

It seems quite possible to me that only the history of the Civil War has exceeded the history of San Francisco in the devotion both of its historians and its readers. At any rate, I wasn't particularly surprised when, about a year ago, I noticed that in a list of local best sellers, four of the first non-fiction books had to do with San Francisco itself.

This civic self-consciousness, which has unkindly been called narcissism, has, I think, two legitimate and rather interesting roots. There is, first, the simple fact that California really is a new country whose effective history is only a little over a century old. There is a great and understandable compulsion to hammer out of the available material a usable past, to discover or even to create the roots for the fascinating and often bewildering society in which we Californians now live. Even the soberest excursion into history often takes on another function, becoming not only an examination and recreation of the event, but also an affirmation of a myth that serves to reassure us that, whether in virtue or in vice, our predecessors did indeed stand seven feet tall.

There is another reason for this preoccupation—one that, as a writer who has contributed in a small way to the San Francisco bookshelf, I have personally experienced. This is simply that the history of San Francisco actually is extraordinarily interesting. One might add that this is a fortunate thing, for the dozens of books that rework the familiar material would otherwise represent the world's foremost collection of pious boredom.

Two recent additions to this literature, George R. Stewart's *Committee of Vigilance*—his eighteenth book, incidentally—and Curt Gentry's *The Madams of San Francisco* are both uncommonly well done contributions to the history of the city and books that will surely be found on the shelf a good many years from now.

Mr. Stewart, who has given his book the subtitle *Revolution in San Francisco, 1851*, is concerned with examining the rousing events of the hundred days when the functions of the police and the judiciary were largely usurped by the first Committee of Vigilance, whose extralegal activities raised again a ques-

## 'Company, girls!' & other callings

By Kenneth Lamott

tion of public morality that has existed since the founding of the Republic and that continues to vex us.

For those readers not *au courant* with San Francisco of the 1850s, I should explain that there were two committees of vigilance, the first of which is Mr. Stewart's subject. The second committee, which rose up five years later, was on the whole the more interesting and was certainly the more powerful.

On the occasion of its disbanding it is said to have paraded between 6,000 and 8,000 armed men through the city. I hope that Mr. Stewart intends to continue his researches into this period to give us as lively and well-documented an account of the second committee as he has of the first.

The organization of the second committee had more of the features of a real political revolt, while the first committee was an emergency response to a clear and present danger. Not only had the lives and property of individual citizens been taken by the so-called Sydney Ducks (a collection of cutthroats and whores who had arrived in San Francisco by way of the Australian penal colonies) but the wooden city itself had been threatened by a series of terrifying fires.

Organized largely by merchants—Mr. Stewart reports that not a single practicing lawyer took part—the Committee arrested 91 suspects, hanged four, whipped one, deported 14 to Australia, banished 14 more from California, handed over 15 to the authorities, and discharged the rest. That they acted with remarkable restraint is evident from their voluntary dissolution on the hundredth day. Yet, Mr. Stewart's handling of the political-moral issue seems hardly adequate to the occasion: "We are familiar with the conscientious objector, whose conscience forbids him to perform certain actions, though the law enjoins him to perform them. But cannot conscience be positive? Cannot it force a man to defend his city personally, when he believes that the emergency so demands? Just as a man may refuse to bear arms because his conscience so forbids him, similarly a man, we might think, may go out and hang someone because his conscience so commands him."

Unhappily, Mr. Stewart's other comments on this aspect of the affair hardly rise above this remarkably specious endorsement of Judge Lynch.

In *The Madams of San Francisco* Curt Gentry has adopted the device of telling the history of the city through a faithful accounting of the rise and fall of the institution of prostitution in the special sort of civic coziness that is its dominant tone.

atmosphere of red plush and antimacassars and the madam's traditional cry (first heard in San Francisco) of "Company, girls!" Mr. Gentry is actually concerned with a great deal more than the parlor houses, for a history of prostitution must necessarily touch on such related matters as family life, political rectitude, higher education, law enforcement, religion, alcohol—in fact, the whole spectrum of human behavior that is included in the phrase social history.

But it is the madams themselves who always remain in the foreground of this entertaining and instructive book. Among them are Ah Toy, the pioneer Chinese prostitute and madam, tall with "lily-bound" feet; Belle Cora, whose history became entangled with that of the Second Vigilance Committee; Tessie Wall; Dolly Fine; and, finally, the redoubtable Sally Stanford, who, as I write, has just lost her second campaign for election to the city council of Sausalito, that pleasant town on the northern shore of the Golden Gate. I hasten to add that Miss Stanford is now a respectable restaurant owner and that the most controversial plank of her platform was an entirely humane proposal to provide downtown relief facilities for the convenience of distressed travelers.

If I have any criticism of Mr. Gentry's book it is that the irreverence exists more in the subtitle than in the book itself. Mr. Gentry is an admirable researcher and a good writer, but he lacks the divine spark of the true irreverent. This, however, is a small complaint about an otherwise excellent book.

In contrast to *Committee of Vigilance* and *The Madams of San Francisco*, a handsomely printed little book called *The Forgotten Characters of Old San Francisco*, which consists of reprinted essays by Robert Ernest Cowan, Anne Bancroft and Addie L. Ballou, is an example of a number of the things that are wrong with too many of the books on the San Francisco bookshelf. To begin with, the title is quite misleading, for a good three-quarters of the book is devoted to the harmless old lunatic who called himself Emperor Norton, a bankrupt merchant who in the 1860s wandered the streets in an imperial uniform of his own devising and was encouraged in his delusions of power by, it would appear, the entire population of the city.

I wish that poor Norton could be forgotten, but, alas, one of the dailies has taken him over as a promotional device, and every year or so we San Franciscans are assaulted for weeks on end by playful imperial proclamations issued in his name.

So far as the remaining "forgotten" characters go, they are an exceedingly mixed bag, including the man known as Oofy-Goofy, who has been mentioned in every other reminiscence of this sort, and an amiable citizen whose only eccentricity was his strong dislike of having his first name abbreviated to an initial. There is really very little in this book that justifies its existence except its claim to the attention of readers who are so far gone in San Franciscosity that they are in its dominant tone.